

# The Bloody Battle for Tilly-sur-Seulles: The Sphinx Rampant

The 2nd Gloucesters' Assault on Tilly-sur-Seulles  
11th June 1944

A Scenario for 'Battlefront: WWII'  
By R Mark Davies



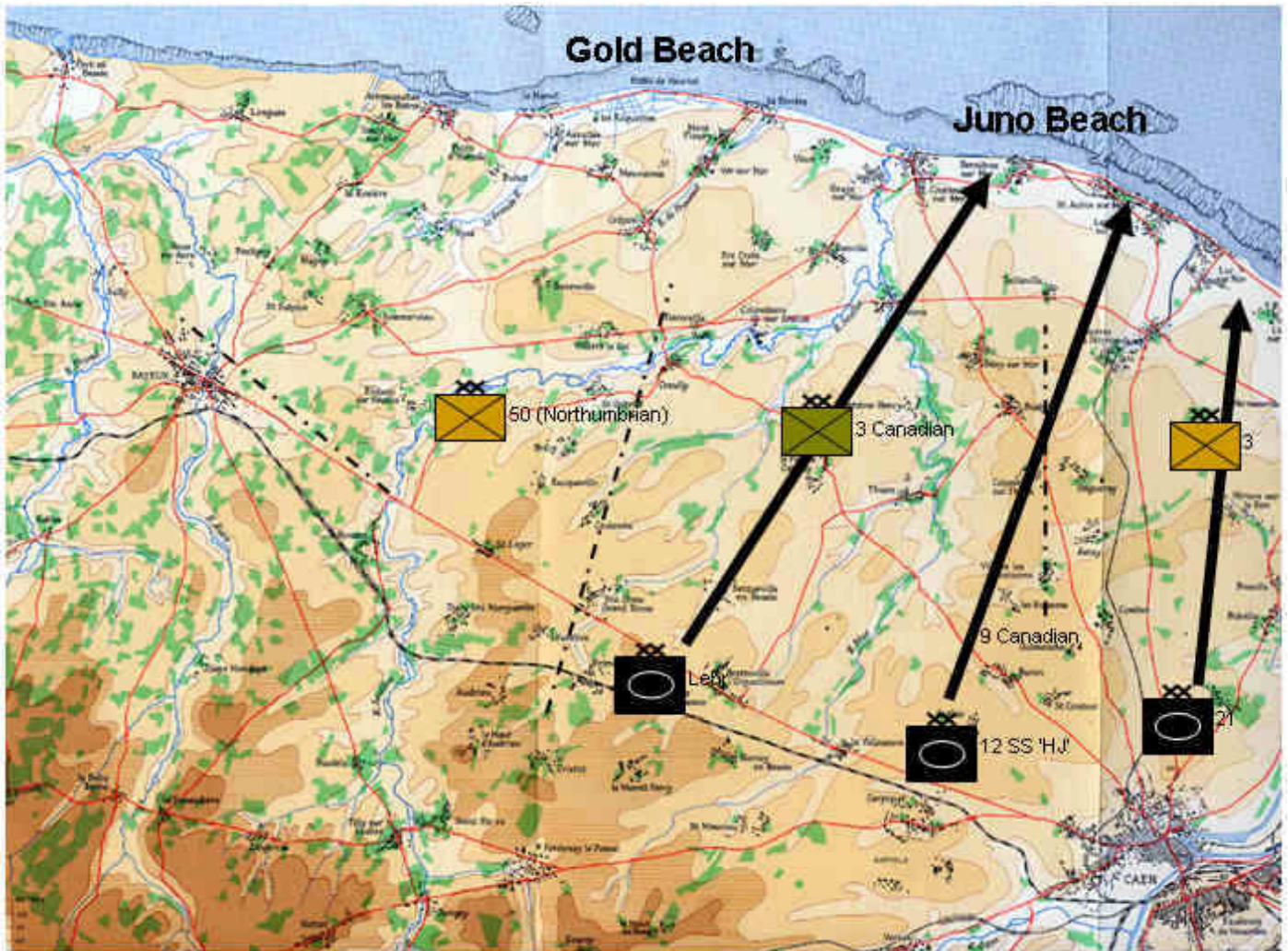
*"The Gloucesters capture the northern half of Tilly, but then things become bogged down. The Germans are reinforcing hard and our attack is stuck. French civilians, some of them bleeding, and one man on crutches, are streaming back past us down the road. There is no sign of our tanks from the right. We hear that they have advanced one behind the other up a narrow hedged lane, three or four have been shot and all lost, thus aborting any tank support just when the Gloucesters needed it most." - Major Robert Kiln, 86th (Hertfordshire Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery*

## Historical Background to the Battle of Tilly-sur-Seulles

On D-Day, 6th June 1944, the British XXX Corps, spearheaded by 50th (Northumbrian) Infantry Division, 56th Independent Infantry Brigade and 8th Armoured Brigade, stormed ashore on 'Gold' Beach, just to the northeast of the ancient Norman city of Bayeux. The landings on 'Gold' went reasonably well, with patrols reaching the outskirts of Bayeux by nightfall. However, 8th Armoured Brigade's drive south to the N13 highway was blunted just south of Creully by a sharp encounter late in the evening with the StuG III assault guns of *Kampfgruppe Meyer* (of 352. *Infanterie-Division*).

Having got ashore relatively safely and having almost reached its D-Day objectives, XXX Corps objective was now to drive south for a further 13 miles, to seize its D+1 objective: the high ground and road hub of Villers-Bocage. The famed 7th Armoured Division, the 'Desert Rats', had begun landing on 'Gold' Beach late on D-Day, and would provide the armoured 'punch' for the drive to Villers-Bocage. Following a brief night with little sleep, 61st Recce Regiment and 8th Armoured Brigade were soon moving south, followed by the infantry. Despite its little victory during the previous evening, *Kampfgruppe Meyer* now found itself isolated on the high-ground at St Leger, facing unimaginable quantities of British tanks. Meyer prudently withdrew his small force southwards, seeking the security of friendly units.

Meyer was not to know, but his friends were not too far away. Having shaken off their lethargy of 6th June, the panzers were on the move; 12. *SS-Panzer-Division 'Hitlerjüngend'* had moved into positions along the N13 highway, west of Caen, during the night of 6/7th June. The *Panzer-Lehr-Division* was also on the march and was aiming to arrive on the left of the 12th SS on 8th June. The 12th SS, *Panzer-Lehr* and 21. *Panzer-Division* (which was already fighting north of Caen). The three divisions were brought under the command of 1. *SS-Panzer-Korps*, with the intention of launching a corps-sized assault north to crush the British & Canadian landings.

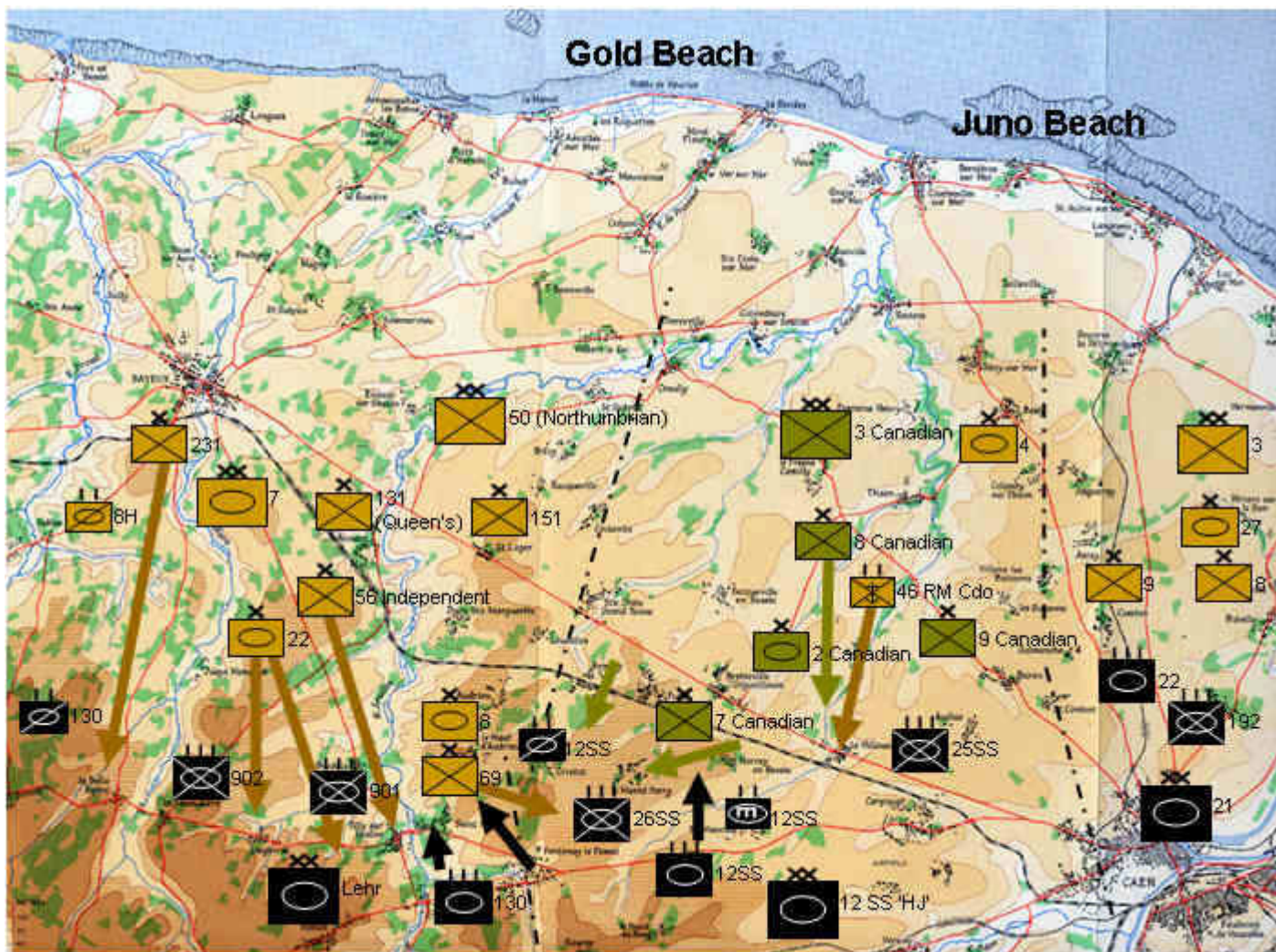


**The Planned Counter-Attack by I. SS-Panzer-Korps**

However, *Panzer-Lehr* was still a full day's march away from its start-line between Bretteville-Orgueilleuse and Brouay and the plan was already starting to unravel: 12th SS had encountered the 3rd Canadian Division advancing in force to cut the N13 Caen-Bayeux highway. The SS had beaten back the first Canadian advance, but had themselves been beaten off when they attempted to resume their attack toward the beaches. As more Canadian brigades came south, the 12th SS had been forced to switch from an offensive to a defensive posture along the line of the N13. To make matters worse, the 12th SS Recce Battalion had reported that *Panzer-Lehr's* planned start-line was already firmly in Canadian hands and that British troops were already south of the N13 at St Leger and were now advancing south along the Seules valley and toward the high ground at Audrieu. *Panzer-Lehr* was now ordered to mount a single-division attack down the Villers-Bocage to Bayeux axis, thereby outflanking the British and Canadian formations that had so far been detected along the N13.

On the morning of 9th June, despite considerable harassment by Allied fighter-bombers during their march, a sizeable battlegroup from *Panzer-Lehr* was finally in position at Juaye-Mondaye, only a few kilometres south of Bayeux and ready to strike at the city. However, other elements of the division had been engaged between Tilly-sur-Seules and Fontenay-le-Pesnel by the forward elements of 50th (Northumbrian) Division and 8th Armoured Brigade, who had side-stepped the 12th SS Recce Battalion at Audrieu to take the high ground at Point 103 and the village of St Pierre. The attack on Bayeux was soon called off and the division's offensive efforts were re-directed to re-taking St Pierre and Point 103. The attack on Bayeux had in any case, run into 56th Independent Infantry Brigade at Ellon and was about to encounter the 22nd Armoured Brigade (7th Armoured Division), which was marching through Bayeux with the intention of driving through Tilly-sur-Seules and driving on to Villers-Bocage.

By the morning of 10th June, 22nd Armoured Brigade had gathered its entire strength south of Bayeux and, preceded by heavy artillery bombardment on all likely German positions between Bayeux and Tilly-sur-Seulles, began its drive south. However, the desert veterans found the going tough in such close terrain as Panthers, Pzkw IVs and panzerfausts took a constant toll on the British tanks. As the terrain became even thicker further south, the advance slowly ground to a halt as the tanks waited for the hard-pressed motor infantry of the 1st Battalion, The Rifle Brigade to catch up and clear hedgerows, orchards, farms and villages. More infantry was clearly needed and 131 (Queen's) Brigade were still not available. However, 56th Independent Brigade (known as the 'Sphinx Brigade' due to all three regiments of the brigade having the Napoleonic 'Egypt' battle honour and associated Sphinx device on their cap-badges) was nearby and Brigadier Cotton soon found his brigade placed under the command of 7th Armoured Division.



**The Battles between Bayeux & Caen on 11th June 1944**

Now formed up into armour-infantry battlegroups, the reinforced 7th Armoured Division resumed its advance to Tilly-sur-Seulles on 11th June; the 2nd Gloucesters advanced down the main axis, toward Bucéels, with the tanks of 4th County of London Yeomanry (4 CLY). The 2nd Essex meanwhile, with the 5th Royal Tank Regiment (5 RTR) hooked right through Bernières-Bocage, with the intention of cutting the Tilly-Lingèvres road. 2nd South Wales Borderers (2 SWB) remained in reserve with 1 RTR at the Jerusalem crossroads. The spearhead battlegroups skirmished their way southwards throughout the morning, steadily pushing back the outpost lines of the *Panzer-Lehr* battlegroups until the main defence lines started to crystalise just north of Tilly-sur-Seulles and Lingèvres. With their objectives in sight, the Gloucester and Essex infantrymen gathered their strength and waited for the artillery and air power to soften up the enemy before going in with the tanks.

At around 1730hrs, a storm of steel and high explosive, from artillery, Typhoons and even battleships out at sea, hit likely German positions and forming-up points in the whole Tilly-sur-Seulles area. However, when the barrage lifted, the Desert Rats' tanks were nowhere to be seen! Nevertheless, the infantry moved forward; the 2nd Essex into Verrières Wood (which would subsequently be known as Essex Wood) on the northern edge of Lingèvres, and the 2nd Gloucesters into Tilly-sur-Seulles itself. For the 2nd Gloucesters this would be their first major battle...

### **Scenario Overview**

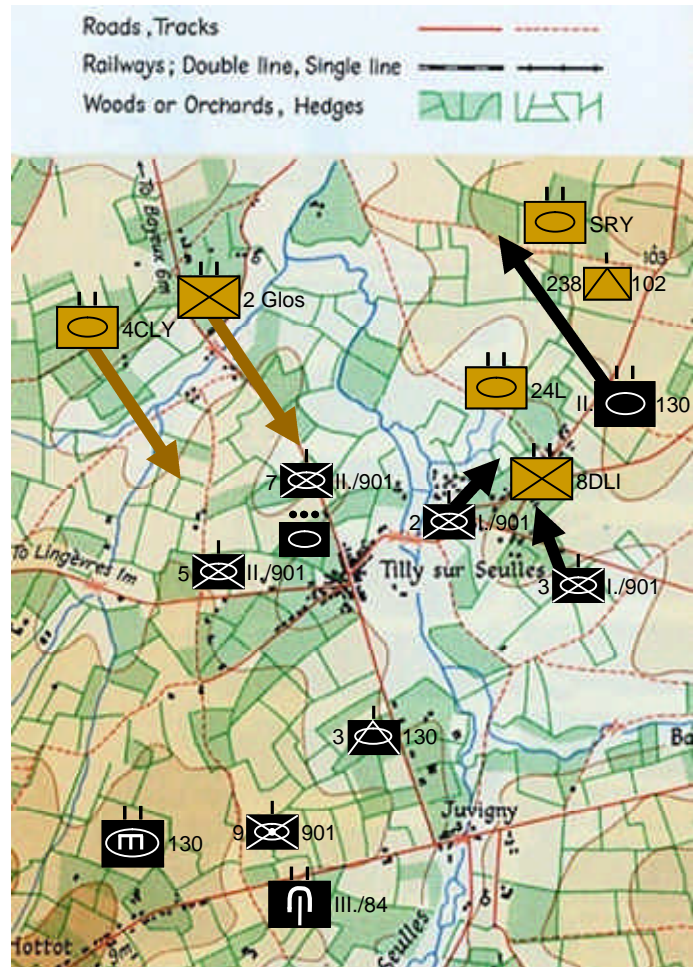
This scenario is a Medium to Large scenario, covering the first assault by the 2nd Gloucesters against Tilly-sur-Seulles on 11th June. The assault by 2nd Essex on Verrières Wood and the concurrent battles in St Pierre and on Point 103 will be covered by other scenarios in this series, as will the later battles for Tilly-sur-Seulles.

Note that this scenario links with the Cristot scenario by Richard de Ferrars and Paddy Green. The events detailed in their scenario were occurring just across the river Seulles on the same day:

<http://fireandfury.com/scenarios/bloodhonourcristot.pdf>

Proff Pender's 'A Hard Day's Fighting' scenario also covers the final assault on Lingèvres three days later, on 14th June:

<http://fireandfury.com/scenarios/lingevres.pdf>



# **Briefing for Lieutenant Colonel D W Biddle, Officer Commanding 2nd Bn, The Gloucestershire Regiment, 56th (Independent) Infantry Brigade**

## **Situation, 1730hrs Sunday 11th June 1944**

Having been designated as the brigade reserve battalion since D-Day, your battalion has finally been rotated into the front line for the advance on Tilly-sur-Seulles and Villers-Bocage. The 2nd SWBs meanwhile have replaced you as brigade reserve, while the 2nd Essex have been temporarily swapped with 22nd Armoured Brigade for the tanks of 4th CLY, who will support you in the coming battle. The 'Desert Rats', resplendent in their silk cravats and suede desert boots certainly exude confidence and that confidence seems to be reflected in your men, who are keen to get stuck into their first battle.

Having spent the night at Jerusalem crossroads, your battalion has been standing ready all day, waiting for 4 CLY to clear the enemy outposts from Bucéels. However, 4 CLY's earlier confidence seems to have been somewhat misplaced, as their attack ground to a halt at Bucéels as they waited for the artillery to shift the stubborn defenders.

With Bucéels finally cleared in the afternoon, your battalion has been brought forward, through the shattered village, up to the start-line for your attack.

## **Mission**

You are to assault Tilly-sur-Seulles, with the intention of denying the vital crossroads and Seulles bridges to the enemy.

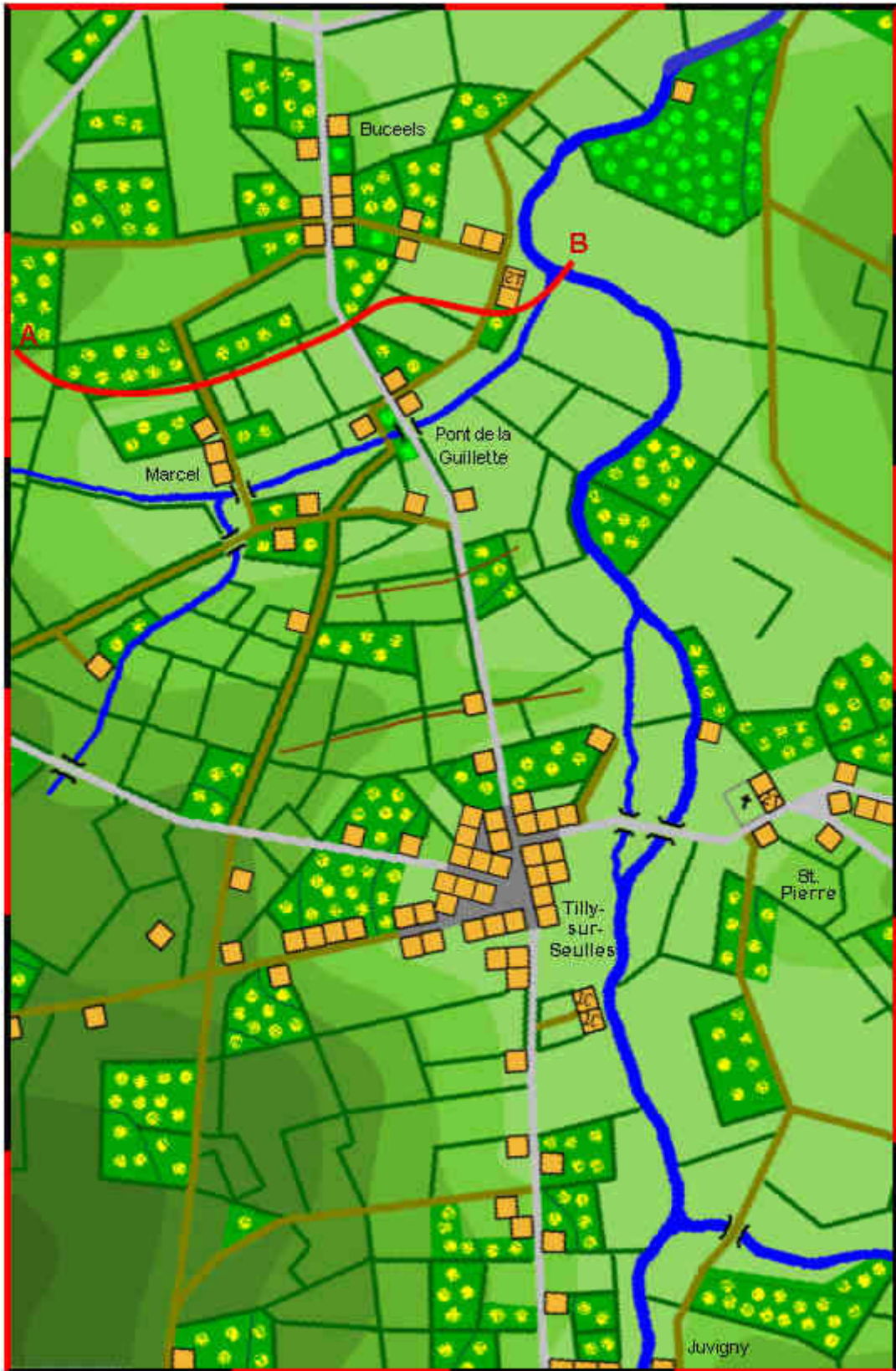
## **Execution**

### **General Outline**

- Following the pre-programmed fire plan and tactical air attacks, you will immediately establish a bridgehead over the Pont-Esprit stream at Pont de La Guillette.
- With the bridgehead established, you are to assault the town of Tilly-sur-Seulles without delay. Intelligence reveals the town to be only lightly-held by the enemy, as they are already fully-engaged in the fighting at St Pierre, Point 103 and Cristot.
- 4 CLY will hook right to outflank the town from the west.
- 22nd Armoured Brigade, with 2nd Essex under command, will assault Lingèvres, some 3 miles to the west, in order to prevent enemy reinforcement of Tilly from that direction.

### **Deployment**

- All elements of 2nd Gloucesters start the game deployed north of the line A-B.
- All on-table elements of 86 Field Regiment should be deployed on-table at the start and should be attached to HQ or Manoeuvre Elements.
- The 'A' Squadron command tank from 4 CLY, plus two other tanks from the squadron, re deployed on-table at the start. Note that only one of these tanks may be a Firefly. The rest of 4 CLY and the attached 'A' Company, 1st Rifle Brigade will arrive later as reinforcements.



### Fire Support

- The preparatory barrage must be plotted on map before any German units or hidden unit markers are placed on the table.
- The preparatory barrage fires for the first two turns.
- The barrage comprises the full 86th Field Regiment (3x Batteries, each with 4x 25pdr Field Guns: Large Template with -1 vV & +0 vTGsV), the 64th Medium Regiment (1x Battery with 4x 5.5-inch Guns: Large Template with +1 vV & +2 vTGsV and 1x Battery with 4x 4.5-inch

Guns: Large Template with 0 vV & +1 vTGsV) and naval gunfire support (4x Large Templates with +3 vV & +4 v TGsV).

- The 25pdrs and Mediums may be concentrated and may thicken each other's fire up to a maximum of +3 vV & +4 vTGsV.
- The 25pdrs and Mediums may not be split into fire missions smaller than Troop-sized (i.e. two templates, which may be concentrated).
- The naval gunfire support may not be concentrated and may not be thickened.
- The naval gunfire may be split into single-template fire missions.
- From the Allied Turn 3, Major Kiln's battery from 86th Field Regiment will be available in Direct Support. The two FOs (Lt Dick Greig & Lt Ted Hall) may either call for their own Troop (half-battery) or for the whole battery. No higher-level fire support is available, as it will then be switched to support the 2nd Essex at Verrières Wood and the ongoing battles at St Pierre, Point 103 and Cristot.
- No smoke is available in the initial barrage, but Major Kiln's battery may fire smoke afterwards. The battery has up to three rounds of smoke available (note that a single troop may for example, therefore fire six rounds of smoke if the other troop fires none).

### Air Support

- Three Typhoon fighter-bombers will hit pre-selected targets with bombs in the Allied Turn 3 and Turn 4 (i.e. three aircraft in each turn). As with the preparatory barrage, the targets must be plotted on map before any German units and hidden unit markers are placed on the table.
- From Turn 5 onwards, the attached Forward Air Controller may attempt to call in up to one Typhoon per turn, which may make Tank-Busting or Strafing attacks on targets identified by the FAC.
- Any aircraft that survives its first attack without being Suppressed, Disordered or Knocked Out may return in the next turn to Strafe any German unit or hidden unit marker.

### Friendly Forces

- Your order of battle is detailed at Annex A below.
- All elements of the 2nd Gloucesters are rated as 'Trained'. 4 CLY, 86 Field Regiment and the RAF Forward Air Controller are rated as 'Experienced'.
- Your flanks are secured by 22nd Armoured Brigade on your right and by 50th Division on your left, beyond the Seullles.

### Enemy Forces

- Your opposition have been identified as the Panzer-Lehr Division, which is well-equipped with the latest tanks, halftracks and other armoured vehicles.
- The enemy outpost line is deployed along the Pont-Esprit Stream.

## Game Sequence

- The British have the first turn.
- The game lasts 20 turns or until one side concedes.

## Victory Conditions

- Very simply, victory is awarded to the side which has the only un-disordered unit within 10 inches of Tilly-sur-Seulles crossroads at the end of Turn 20.



**BATTLEGROUP**  
**2nd Battalion, The Gloucestershire Regiment**  
 Lieutenant Colonel D W Biddle



- Command  
**HQ** x1 Commander BR-50
- Transport/Recce  
**ⓧ** x1 M3A1 Scout Car BR-35

- MANOEUVRE ELEMENT 'A' Company**
- Command  
**HQ** x1 Commander BR-50
  - x9 Infantry (1 with PIAT) BR-49
  - Organic Fire Support  
**ⓧ** x1 2-inch Mortar BR-55

- MANOEUVRE ELEMENT 'B' Company**
- Command  
**HQ** x1 Commander BR-50
  - x9 Infantry (1 with PIAT) BR-49
  - Organic Fire Support  
**ⓧ** x1 2-inch Mortar BR-55

- MANOEUVRE ELEMENT 'C' Company**
- Command  
**HQ** x1 Commander BR-50
  - x9 Infantry (1 with PIAT) BR-49
  - Organic Fire Support  
**ⓧ** x1 2-inch Mortar BR-55

- MANOEUVRE ELEMENT 'D' Company**
- Command  
**HQ** x1 Commander BR-50
  - x9 Infantry (1 with PIAT) BR-49
  - Organic Fire Support  
**ⓧ** x1 2-inch Mortar BR-55

**ATTACHMENTS**

- x3 6pdr Anti-Tank Gun BR-46
- Transport  
**ⓧ** x3 Loyd Carrier BR-32
- Organic Fire Support  
**ⓧ** x3 3-inch Mortar BR-56
- Transport  
**ⓧ** x3 Universal Carrier (no MG) BR-31
- x2 Assault Pioneers (1 Flame) BR-51
- Transport  
**ⓧ** x2 Jeep (no MG) BR-42
- Forward Air Controller/Recce  
**ⓧ** x1 Forward Observer BR-52
- Transport/Recce  
**ⓧ** x1 M3A1 Scout Car BR-35

- MANOEUVRE ELEMENT Carrier Platoon**
- Command/Recce  
**HQ** x1 Commander BR-50
  - Recce  
**ⓧ** x2 Infantry (with PIAT) BR-49
  - Recce  
**ⓧ** x2 Bren Light Machine Gun BR-53
  - Organic Fire Support/Recce  
**ⓧ** x2 2-inch Mortar BR-55
  - Transport/Recce  
**ⓧ** x7 Universal Carrier (with MG) BR-31

**7th ARMoured DIVISION ATTACHMENT**

- MANOEUVRE ELEMENT 'A' Squadron, 4th County of London Yeomanry**  
 Major Peter Scott
- Command  
**ⓧ** x1 Cromwell IV 75mm Cruiser Tank BR-05
  - x5 Cromwell IV 75mm Cruiser Tank BR-05
  - x1 Cromwell V 85mm Close Support Tank BR-06
  - x2 Sherman Vc Firefly 17pdr Tank BR-04

**50th INFANTRY DIVISION ATTACHMENT**

- DIRECT FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT**  
**Battery, 86th (Hertfordshire Yeomanry) Field Regiment, Royal Artillery**  
 Major Robert Kiln
- On-Table Attachment/Recce  
**ⓧ** x2 Forward Observer BR-52
  - Transport/Recce  
**ⓧ** x2 Sherman V OP Tank BR-31
  - Off-Table Direct Fire Support  
**ⓧ** x4 Sexton SP 25pdr Field Gun BR-26.1

## **Briefing for Oberstleutnant Schöne, Officer Commanding II. Bataillon, Panzer-Grenadier-Lehr-Regiment 901**

### **Situation, 1730hrs Sunday 11th June 1944**

Most of your battalion has finally reached the front line, south of the Allied bridgehead in Normandy, despite the best efforts of the Allied *jabos* to stop you. However, the divisional plan has already been changed twice within 24 hours and now; instead of driving the Allies back into the sea, your battalion has been ordered to adopt defensive positions near the village of Tilly-sur-Seulles.

This has all been very disheartening for the men, who were expecting to carry the fight to the enemy in a glorious attack and avenge the losses suffered from the air attacks of the last few days. Indeed, some elements of I. Bataillon behaved badly under Allied artillery fire this morning and as a consequence, you, your officers and your NCOs have been working hard all day, trying to re-invigorate the regiment's fighting spirit.

These efforts are certainly not helped by the thinly-spread nature of your battalion's positions, allied to the never-ending stream of bad news filtering back from other units: the 902nd has been ordered to halt its drive to Bayeux and has been mounting a fighting retreat against increasing numbers of British tanks ever since. Meanwhile, to the east of the Seulles, the British have taken Point 103, overlooking your position, and are even in the village of St Pierre, just across the river! I. Bataillon has attempted to dislodge them from St Pierre, but only with partial success.

Now the artillery has opened up again and massive shells (probably from battleships, by the sound of them) are smashing into the already-pulverised village. Your outpost line at Bucéels reports that the British are advancing in strength with tanks and that they are pulling back to your main defence line.

It's time to stop worrying and look to your front. The British are coming.

### **Mission**

You are to hold the line north of Tilly-sur-Seulles, with the intention of keeping the vital crossroads and Seulles bridges open.

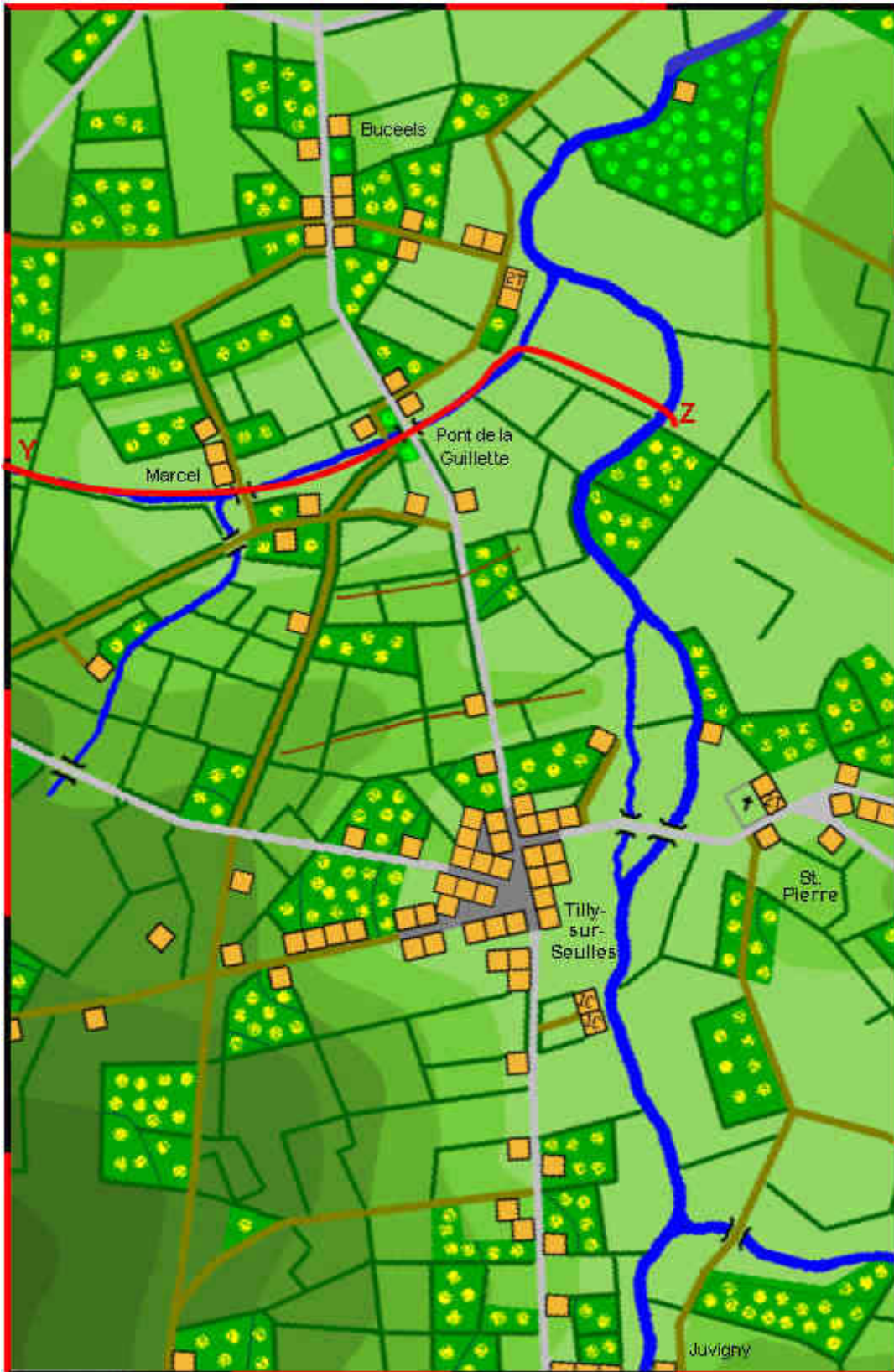
### **Execution**

#### **General Outline**

- The retention of Tilly-sur-Seulles is essential to the divisional plan, as the loss of the crossroads and bridges would effectively cut the division in half.
- As discussed, your battalion is spread very thin. You only have two companies (5th & 7th) and a handful of tanks and flak guns with which to defend the village and crossroads.
- The crossroads and village itself is an absolute magnet for Allied artillery and aircraft. It was bombed for the first time on 7th June and the Allies have periodically pounded the place every day since. This has only intensified since the British took St Pierre, on the east bank, on the 9th. You have therefore ordered your two companies to dig in north of the village, where they should hopefully avoid the worst of the speculative bombardment and should be able to mount numerous ambushes in the dense hedgerows and orchards there. Should the Allies break into the town, General Bayerlein has promised to mount a counter-attack using the few uncommitted divisional reserves.

## Deployment

- Your forces may be deployed as hidden unit markers, anywhere south of line Y-Z, as shown on the map. Historically, the two panzer-grenadier companies, plus the tanks and flak elements were mainly deployed north of the village, with Philips' 5. Kompanie on the left and Mahr's 7. Kompanie on the right, with the Panthers on the road, in the centre of the position. The SP guns of 9. Kompanie were deployed near Juvigny.
- You may also deploy 15 dummy unit markers.
- All Troops and Guns may be dug into foxholes and weapon pits, without connecting trenches. Alternatively Troops (but not guns) may be dug into BUAs.
- All tanks and SP guns may be deployed in hull-down positions.
- Note that the SP guns of 9. (slG) Kompanie are deployed on table



### Fire Support

- Panzer-Artillerie-Lehr-Regiment 130 is too busy on other fire support tasks to support you. However, you do have the regiment's 9. (sIG) Kompanie in Direct Support and Bayerlein is rushing the III. Bataillon, Werfer-Regiment 84 (from Werfer-Brigade 7) to your immediate aid.
- Note that the werfers only have a range of 40 inches. You may emplace them 10 inches off-table if you wish, but their rockets will only be able to reach 30 inches onto the table.

- Werfers may not concentrate their templates or thicken other fire missions.

### Air Support

- The Allies have near-complete air supremacy and have been attacking *Panzer-Lehr* persistently for days now. Unbelievably, on the sole occasion that the useless *Luftwaffe* made an appearance over the battlefield, they bombed our own troops in Fontenay-le-Pesnel!

### Friendly Forces

- Your troops are detailed in the order of battle at Annex A below.
- Your forces are mainly classed as 'Experienced'. However, the Panzers, Panzerjägers and Pioneers are classed as 'Veteran'.
- Your left flank is thinly screened by the rest of your battalion and beyond them, the 902nd.
- Your right flank is screened by the river Seulles and the regiment's I. Bataillon, who are fighting in St Pierre, plus the tanks of II./Panzer-Lehr-Regiment 130.

### Enemy Forces

- The enemy is attacking in some strength, with large numbers of tanks and considerable amounts of artillery and air support. Thus far over the last two days, the enemy has attacked boldly with tanks, unsupported by infantry, in close terrain – and has suffered for it. However, your outposts now report that British infantry are attacking in approximately battalion strength.

### Game Sequence

- The British have the first turn.
- The game lasts 20 turns or until one side concedes.

### Victory Conditions

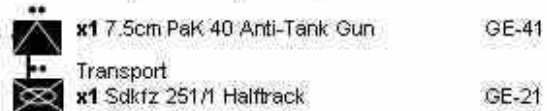
- Very simply, victory is awarded to the side which has the only un-disordered unit within 10 inches of Tilly-sur-Seulles crossroads at the end of Turn 20.



**MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS**



**8. (Schwere) Kompanie ATTACHMENTS**



**ATTACHED MANOEUVRE ELEMENTS**

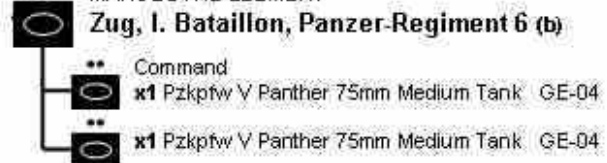
**MANOEUVRE/DIRECT FIRE SUPPORT ELEMENT**



**MANOEUVRE ELEMENT**



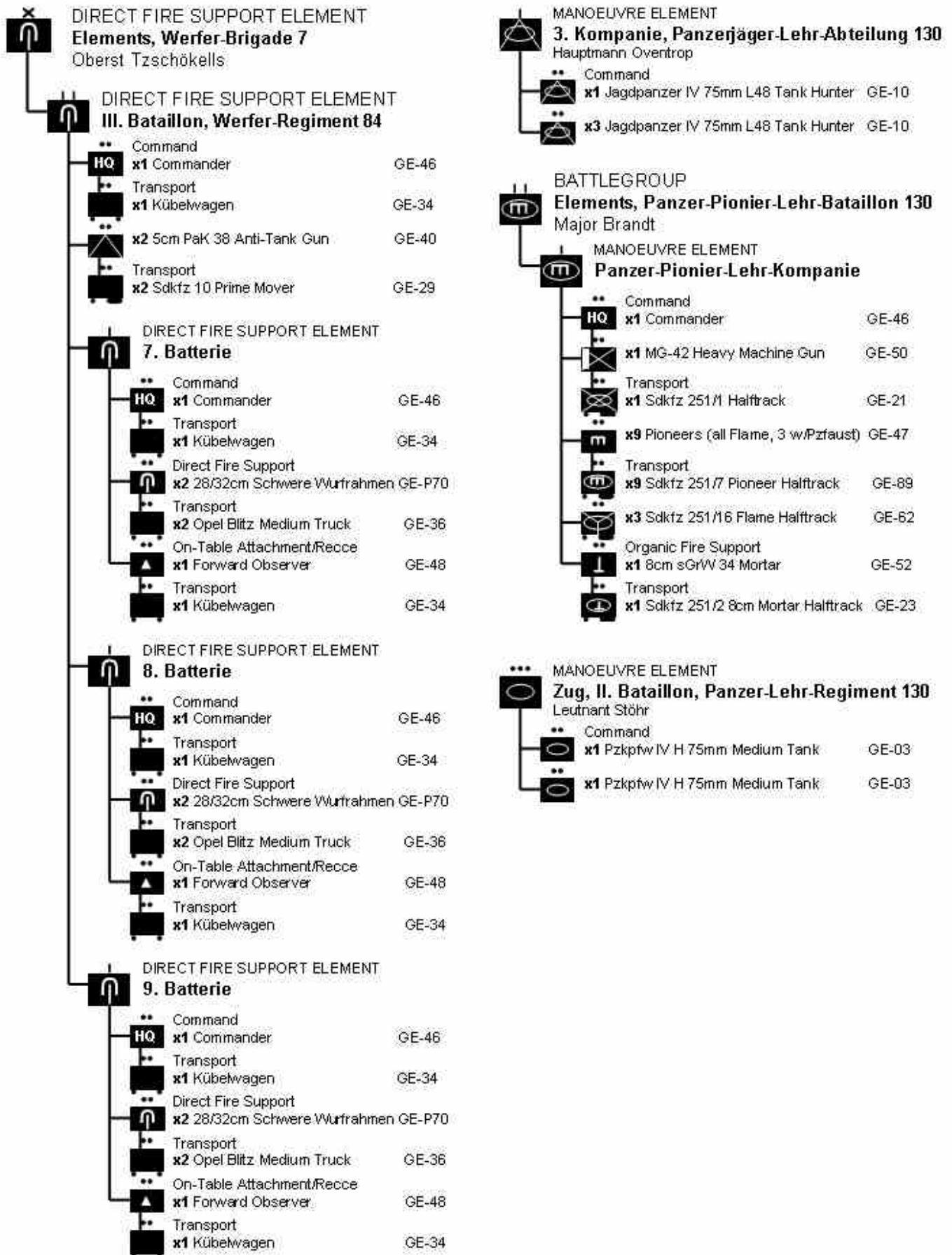
**MANOEUVRE ELEMENT**



(a) The Grille SP guns of 9. Kompanie must be deployed on-table. The company's forward observer must be attached to either 5. Kompanie, 7. Kompanie, or to Schöne's HQ.

(b) I. Bataillon of Panzer-Regiment 6 had been drafted in to Panzer Lehr Division to fill the vacant Panther battalion slot in Panzer-Regiment 130. Consequently this unit is also referred to in many sources as I. Bataillon, Panzer-Lehr-Regiment 130.

## Possible German Reinforcements



## Terrain Effects

Terrain	Concealment	Cover	Mobility		
			Troops	Tracked or Half-Tracked Vehicle	Wheeled Vehicle or Gun
Open	Nil	Nil	Full Speed	Full Speed	Full Speed
Woods	Dense Area	Soft	Full Speed	Half Speed & Bog	Half Speed & Bog
Orchards	Sparse Area	Soft	Full Speed	Half Speed	Half Speed
Streets	Dense Area	Soft	Full Speed	Half Speed	Half Speed
Built-Up Area	Dense Edge	Hard	Full Speed	Impassable	Gun: Half Speed Veh: Impassable
River Seulles	Nil	Nil	Breach & Bog	Impassable	Impassable
Pont-Esprit Stream	Nil	Nil	Breach	Breach & Bog	Breach & Bog
Bocage Hedgerow	Dense Edge	Hard	Breach	Breach & Bog	Breach & Bog
Low Hedgerow	Sparse Edge	Soft	Half Speed	Breach	Breach & Bog
Paved Road	Nil	Nil	Double Speed	Double Speed	Double Speed
Unpaved Road	Nil	Nil	Full Speed	Full Speed	Full Speed

- Note that all hedgerows are considered to be Bocage Hedges unless they border a paved road; in which case they are Low Hedges.
- Note that there are two crest-lines on spurs that cross the main road to the north of Tilly-sur-Seulles.

## Optional Rules Used In This Scenario

- **MG Grazing Fire** (see website)
- **British Forward Observer Replacement Rule** (see website)

## Scenario-Balancing Options

### Favouring the British

- Increase troop quality of the Gloucesters to 'Experienced'.
- Allow a full squadron of the 4 CLY to be on-table at the start and feed in the rest of the regiment early as reinforcements (plus a Motor Company – 'A' Coy, 1 RB), as per the plan.

### Favouring the Germans

- Allow a proportion of the reinforcements to be on-table at the outset.
- Deploy 12 inches of mixed minefields and a further 12 inches of barbed wire.

## Historical Outcome

The Gloucesters launched their attack at 1730hrs, following a very heavy bombardment of the town. The battalion advanced with two companies 'up' – 'A' Company on the right and 'C' on the left. A pair of Panthers was encountered on the main road, who engaged the Gloucesters suddenly, at almost point-blank range. One of the Panthers was knocked out with a PIAT (Lieutenant J B Evans being killed in the act) and the second withdrew.



With the German outpost line taken, 'C' & 'D' Companies



passed through and assaulted the town. The Gloucesters were now subjected to heavy and accurate fire from the *Grille* 15cm self-propelled guns of the 901st's 9th Company, mixed with fire from the panzer-grenadier companies' own 8cm mortars and 7.5cm howitzers. Then, to make matters even worse, 28cm *Nebelwerfer* rockets began slamming among the assaulting companies. The town was still far from being taken. There was still little sign of the 4th County of London Yeomanry completing their part of the plan, in outflanking the village from the west.



Finally, the assaulting companies reached the village. The defence intensified, with bitter street-fighting being the order of the day. The Gloucesters' Carrier Platoon made a dash down the main street and succeeded in reaching the crossroads, but with one of their Carriers knocked out in the middle of the crossroads by a German tank, they were soon forced back.

With Cromwell tanks now finally starting to appear in numbers, the Gloucesters made another, desperate and last-ditch attempt to take the town. However, the Germans too were putting in an attack – Jagdpanzer IVs and panzer-pioneers now launched a counter attack from the south and were soon joined by tanks from St Pierre. Despite only light casualties (4 dead, 5 missing and 22 wounded), this fresh counter-attack caused a crisis of confidence in one of the leading companies of the Gloucesters; they rapidly fell back, despite the best efforts of their Company Sergeant-Major.

Sadly, the fear seemed to be infectious and the battalion's officers (as well as those attached from the Royal Artillery) made great efforts to re-instill confidence in the inexperienced infantrymen. Nevertheless, the battalion was ordered to withdraw back behind the Pont-Esprit stream at 2200hrs and Tilly remained solidly in German hands. However, the Germans had suffered: Oberleutnant Mahr's 7. Kompanie had only 43 men left at the end of the day.

2nd Essex's assault on Verrières Wood meanwhile, was an unmitigated disaster. Advancing across over 1,000 yards of open ground against tanks, they were cut to pieces. A German counter-attack by pioneers with half-track-mounted flamethrowers, supported by tanks, then scattered the survivors. The tank support by 5 RTR never materialised and even their own 6pdr anti-tank guns were nowhere to be seen. 2nd Essex suffered over 200 casualties and the three leading companies were reduced to one composite company at the end of the day.



A further effort was made by 131 (Queen's Brigade) and the tanks of 1 RTR to take Tilly on the 12th, but this made no more progress than the Gloucesters' attack of the 11th. British efforts were now switched to outflanking Tilly from the west and 151 Brigade, supported by 4/7th Dragoon Guards, attacked Lingèvres successfully on the 14th, despite extremely stiff opposition.

A final assault on Tilly was made on the 18th by the re-constituted 2nd Essex, this time properly supported by tanks and AVREs. Their revenge against Panzer-Lehr was completed on the 19th as the last German resistance in Tilly was stamped out. At the end of the Battle of Tilly-sur-Seulles, Panzer-Grenadier-Regiment 901 had been reduced to only 200 men.

## **Umpire's Eyes Only – Special Scenario Rules & Events**

- Werfers are extremely vulnerable to counter-battery fire due to their highly distinctive firing signature and short range, leading to close proximity to the battlefield. This is particularly problematic in this scenario, as 50th Division have possession of Point 103, which overlooks the battlefield and the 4.2-inch mortars of 2nd Cheshires, standing ready in the counter-mortar role, are itching to engage werfer batteries. Consequently, whenever a werfer battery fires (on or off table), roll a D10. On a roll of 9 or 10, that battery will be engaged by a platoon of 4.2-inch Mortars (2x Large Templates at -1 vV & +0 vTGsV) in the next British Indirect Fire Phase. If the werfer battery fires again from the same position it will be engaged on a roll of 7, 8, 9 or 10.
- 4 CLY were severely delayed in this battle for reasons that are not completely clear. A Coy, 1RB also do not appear to have played a part (they may have been otherwise engaged with German stragglers and die-hards). Consequently, make the British player believe that his reinforcements are on the way, but in reality the only reinforcements will be the remainder of 'A' Squadron, 4 CLY. All reinforcements arrive anywhere on the British table edge:
  - Turn 4: Troop of 2x tanks.
  - Turn 7: Troop of 2x tanks.
  - Turn 10: Troop of 2x tanks.
- Bayerlein will release reserves to Schöne depending on the situation:
  - Turn 5: III. Bataillon, Werfer-Regiment 84 will move onto the table in column on the Juvigny (southern) road. Alternatively, the werfer battalion may emplace 10 inches off-table and conduct indirect fire from there (remember that their range is limited to 40 inches, so their rockets will only reach 30 inches onto table).
  - Once the British penetrate to within 10 inches of Tilly-sur-Seulles crossroads **or** inflict 50% casualties on one of the two Panzer-Grenadier companies (whichever happens first), a counter-attack force comprising 3. Kompanie, Panzerjäger-Lehr-Abteilung 130 and the Panzer-Pioneer company, will arrive anywhere on the southern table edge.
  - Two turns after the counter-attack force moves onto table, Lt Stöhr's platoon of Pzkw IVs will move onto table from St Pierre.